

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) As per information received from the Indian Missions in Gulf and some of the non Gulf countries with large number of Indian workers, no cases of abduction and killings have been reported in last five years.

(c) As per Section 10 of the Emigration Act, 1983, no person can function as a recruiting agent or carry on the business of recruitment except under and in accordance with a certificate issued in that behalf by the registering authority. As and when such unauthorised agencies come to notice, the matter is referred to the State police authorities for action under Section 24 of the Emigration Act, 1983.

(d) The details of Indian workers with or without work permit in these countries are as under:

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| Bahrain | — | 2,03,573 (with permit) (upto 31.3.06) |
| Oman | — | 3,66,000 (approx.) |
| Kuwait | — | 4,68,777 (with work permit) (as on 31.08.06) |
| UAE | — | 1.3 million (with or without permit) |
| Saudi Arabia | — | 12,39,686 (as on Feb, 05) |
| Malaysia | — | 1,37,636 |
| Yemen | — | 8000 (approx.). |
| Jordan | — | 3938 (Nov, 06) |
| Mauritius | — | 9780 (as per total no. of permits issued on 28.11.06) |

(e) Yes, Sir. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for bilateral cooperation for protection of Indian workers has already been signed with Jordan and Qatar. Similar MoUs are contemplated with some other Gulf countries and Malaysia.

Overseas Indian Centre at Dubai

1713. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB PEEVEE: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to give approval to set up Overseas Indian Centre at Dubai;

(b) if so, the details of facilities the overseas Indians can expect from this centre;

(c) whether there is any proposal from Government to start such centres in other parts of the Gulf region;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) The Overseas Indian Centre at Dubai would provide medical, legal and financial counseling etc. to the overseas Indian workers in the Gulf countries. At present, there is no proposal to set up another such centre in the Gulf region.

Exploitation of Indian women in Gulf countries

1714. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the reports of cases of Indian women workers being sexually exploited in the Gulf countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the actions Government have taken to protect the female workers?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) As per the information received from the Indian Missions in Gulf countries, 35 cases during the year 2005 and 20 cases during 2006 have been reported in United Arab Emirates and one case has been reported in Oman during 2006. The Missions have provided necessary assistance to the victims including arranging their repatriation to India.

(c) Based on the report of CGI, Dubai, registration certificate of one recruiting agent has been cancelled under section 14 of the Emigration Act, 1983. Taking into account the vulnerability of women and the recommendation of the National Commission for Women, instructions were issued on 20.11.2003 to all the Protectors of Emigrants for not granting emigration clearance to women below the age of thirty years for employment abroad as housemaids/domestic workers. Further, the employment contract is required to be mandatorily attested by the concerned Indian Mission in all cases of housemaids/domestic workers.

University for NRI students

1715. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has received representation asking to set up a University for NRI students;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (c) The Government views the establishment of a university for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) favourably. The proposal is under consideration of the Government.